

REMARKS

Applicant has amended claim 43 to correct a typographical error and added new claims 46-51 as set forth above. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the outstanding office action is respectfully requested.

The Office has rejected claims 1-45 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 6,317,044 to Maloney (Maloney) in view of US Patent No. 6,801,245 to Shniberg (Shniberg). The Office asserts Maloney teaches: an asset management system (Column 10, lines 11 - 14) comprising one or more stations for receiving a tangible asset and a server system in each of the stations (Column 10, lines 11 - 15; Column 10, lines 34-37), where the remote computer is the station that contains a peripheral for receiving the tangible assets and has a server program on it to manage those assets), wherein the server system stores information regarding tangible asset transactions between the stations and the tangible assets in the asset management system (Figure 37E, step 660) and wherein the server system in each of the stations independently determines whether authorization to access the station is permitted (Column 22, lines 25 - 34). The Office asserts Maloney does not teach a communication medium allows the asset management system to be accessed remotely via the communication medium by the server system, but asserts Shniberg teaches a system for tracking objects that includes a remote tracking center that is located remotely from a local tracking computer that remotely communicates with the local computer for tracking information (Column 3, lines 28 - 35; Column 5, lines 12 - 19). Additionally, the Office asserts Maloney teaches the claims 9, 15, and 29, wherein the server system in at least one of the stations monitors one or more environmental conditions acting on the tangible asset and stores information regarding the monitored environmental conditions which can be accessed remotely via the communication medium (Column 10, lines 20 - 21).

Applicant respectfully traverses the Office's rejection. Neither Maloney nor Shniberg, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest, "one or more stations for receiving a tangible asset and a server system in each of the stations . . . wherein the server system in each of the stations independently determines whether authorization to access the station is permitted" as recited in claim 1, "one or more stations for receiving a tangible asset and a server system in each of the stations . . . determining at the server system in each of the stations whether authorization to access the station is permitted" as recited in claims 15 and 29.

As noted in Applicant's prior response, the Office's attention is respectfully directed to FIGS. 1-3 and col. 22, lines 25-34 in Maloney which states:

Upon receiving the identification code contained in the personal identification assembly, the remote controller 54, at step 610, verifies that the personal identification assembly is being used by its owner by prompting the user for a password on video monitor 60, receiving a password from the user at the remote controller 54, and then determining, at step 612, whether or not the user is authorized to access the system 50 by looking-up the identification code and password in a table including authorized code/password combinations.

Accordingly, in Maloney the authorization determination is made at one centralized location in remote controller 54 and not at the storage units 52. The problems with a system, like the one disclosed in Maloney, were described in the background of the above-identified patent application.

In response to Applicant's prior arguments, the Office has asserted, “[W]hen you view Maloney, with the perspective that the remote computer is the station that has within it the server system to provide authorization to the clients for the tangible assets. Then Maloney teaches a station with a server system that provides independent authorization for users (Column 22, lines 25 - 37) where it shows that the remote computer performs all the steps of authorization without any requests to any other systems. That remote computer is also in charge of the peripheral that provides the assets to the users (Column 11, lines 11 - 15).”

Accordingly, assuming *arguendo* the Office's position that the remote controller 54 is the station that has within it the server system to provide authorization to the clients for the tangible assets. The remote controller 54 in Maloney (which the Office now asserts is the station) does not teach or suggest receiving a tangible asset. Maloney states at col. 10, lines 14-16, that an example of a remote controller 54 is an IBM-compatible personal computer which clearly does not teach or suggest receiving tangible assets for storage.

Additionally, Maloney has specifically defined element 54 as a remote controller 54 and illustrated remote controller 54 as separate from storage unit 52. As set forth in Webster's 2nd College Edition Dictionary, remote means, “distant in connection, relation, bearing, or the like.” This is consistent with the rest of the teaching and suggestion

in Mahoney. Applicant's respectfully direct the Office's attention to FIG. 1 and col. 10, lines 10-21, in Maloney which illustrates and state the remote controller 54 is remote from the storage unit 52. Accordingly, Maloney not only does not teach or suggest the present invention, but actually teaches away from it. Like Maloney, Shniberg also does not disclose or suggest the claimed invention.

In sharp contrast, the present invention provides a much more robust and reliable asset management system. As discussed in paragraph [0008] in the summary of the above-identified patent application, "By providing each one of the security asset managers with a web server, each of the security asset managers can be accessed directly by remote devices on a network . . . Since the security asset managers do not need to rely on any intermediate systems, the present invention offers a simpler way to interconnect the security asset managers which uses less power overall. This results in a more robust system since the security asset managers can function independently as a result of not having to rely on the intermediate systems . . . Each security asset manager can be modified, upgraded and/or replaced without affecting any of the other security asset managers that are not being changed. Additionally, the system can continue to operate despite one or more of the security asset managers becoming inaccessible."

Accordingly, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Office is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1, 15, and 29. Since claims 2-14, 43, 46, and 49 depend from and contain the limitations of claim 1, claims 16-28, 44, 47, and 50, depend from and contain the limitations of claim 15, and claims 30-42, 45, 48, and 51 depend from and contain the limitations of claim 29, they are distinguishable over the cited reference and are patentable in the same manner as claims 1, 15, and 29.

Neither Maloney nor Shniberg, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest, "wherein the server system in at least one of the stations monitors one or more environmental conditions acting on the tangible asset and stores information regarding the monitored environmental conditions which can be accessed remotely via the communication medium" as recited in claim 43 or "monitoring one or more environmental conditions acting on the tangible asset in at least one of the stations and storing information regarding the monitored environmental conditions which can be accessed remotely via the communication medium" as recited in claims 44 and 45.

Contrary to the Office's assertions col. 10, lines 20-21 in Maloney merely states, "A video monitor 60 resides atop the remote controller 54 and receives video data for display to system users." However, the video data that Maloney teaches is provided by the video monitor 60 is not actual video of the tangible asset, let alone any teaching or suggestion of monitoring one or more environmental conditions acting on the tangible asset as claimed. The Office's attention is respectfully directed to step 828 in FIG. 37B and col. 23, lines 19-29 in Maloney which states:

The remote controller 54 then outputs, at step 628, the location of the identified object identification assembly 182,502 on video monitor 60 by displaying, preferably, a row and column matrix representative of the connectors 154,570 of the assembly retaining structure 116,500 in which the identified object identification assembly 182,502 resides and by indicating, on the display, the particular row and column of the matrix in which the identified object identification assembly 182,502 is present. (Emphasis added).

Additionally, the Office's attention is respectfully directed to step 828 in FIG. 37D and col. 25, lines 23-27 in Maloney which states:

If object identification assembly 182,502 removals or insertions are detected at step 650, the remote controller 54 outputs the identification codes of the assemblies 182,502 which were removed or inserted on the video monitor 60 at step 654." (Emphasis added).

Accordingly, Maloney only teaches and suggests outputting on video a representation of connectors or video of identification codes and no actual video of the assets themselves, let alone of any monitoring of one or more environmental conditions acting on the tangible asset as claimed. Similarly, Shniberg does not teach or suggest monitoring one or more environmental conditions acting on the tangible asset as claimed. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Office is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 43-45.

Applicant has also added new dependent claims 46-51 which are believed to be distinguishable over the cited references and in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested.

In view of all of the foregoing, Applicant submits that this case is in condition for allowance and such allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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